

SAMPLING COMMERCIAL POULTRY HOUSES FOR AVIAN INFLUENZA (AI)

ITEMS REQUIRED:

- ☐ Clothing and other biosecurity protection;
- ☐ Viral transport kit containing box of 20 (10 ml tubes) of VTM and accompanying swabs;
- ☐ Latex or vinyl gloves;
- ☐ Permanent marking pen;
- ☐ Cooler and ice packs, etc.

SAMPLE COLLECTION:

Note: If a foreign animal disease (a reportable FAD, such as LPAI or HPAI) is suspected, sampling can only be conducted by a certified FADD (Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician). Prior notification of USDA or DAG is required.

- ☐ A total of 10 tubes are collected per poultry house.
Each tube contains 5 swabs taken per specified site, for a total of 50 swabs in 10 tubes.

AREAS TO SAMPLE:

- ☐ Floors or Slats: Take 20 swabs from enough sites to get representative samples from the entire house (20 swabs, 4 tubes). In cage layer houses, both pit floors and/or cage walkways may be sampled.
- ☐ Fan Houses: Take 10 swabs of representative fan areas and fan housings (10 swabs, 2 tubes). Include fan box area and blades/louvers. (Make sure fan is not operating at time of sampling).
- ☐ Walls: Take 10 swabs (10 swabs, 2 tubes) from representative areas of walls. Sample in enough areas to have walked a minimum of 25 percent of the house.
- ☐ Entrance Areas: Take 10 swabs (10 swabs, 2 tubes) from representative areas.
- ☐ Egg Rooms/Utility Rooms: Take 10 swabs (10 swabs, 2 tubes) from representative areas.
- ☐ Coolers or Feed Troughs/Feeders: Take 10 swabs (10 swabs, 2 tubes) from representative areas.
- ☐ Compost: If poultry are composted within the house, take 40 swabs (40 swabs, 8 tubes) from representative areas of the compost piles.
- ☐ Nest Boxes: If the house contains nest boxes, take 10 swabs (10 swabs, 2 tubes) from representative areas of the nest boxes/nesting areas.

SUBMISSION OF SAMPLES TO LABORATORIES

- ❑ Samples can be tested at any DAG or USDA approved laboratory.
- ❑ Call the laboratory in advance to let them know when the samples will arrive
- ❑ To ensure the integrity of swab samples in viral transport medium (VTM):
 - Check that the viral transport medium (VTM) has not changed to a bright pink color (or that clear amber BHI has not turned cloudy), that it remains uncontaminated, and that its date of expiration has not passed.
 - VTM should be refrigerated at all times.
 - Saturate swabs with VTM prior to sampling and immediately following sampling.
 - Place 5 swabs in each tube after sampling.
 - Mark each tube and indicate which samples represent particular areas as detailed.
 - Use a separate submission form for each area.
 - Disinfect the exterior of tubes and their box (including the inside of the lid) prior to transporting to laboratory.
 - Write the farm name and Premise ID on the bottom of the box of samples (not on the lid). If you need a Premise ID number, call the DEM Division of Agriculture (401-222-2781).
 - Keep the swabs in VTM on fresh ice packs until transporting to an approved laboratory (you may need to change ice packs at least every 24 hours).
 - If samples are stored in a freezer for more than 72 hours, seal each box in a plastic bag to prevent drying of the VTM.
 - Place a completed copy of an AI Sample Submission Form in each box with corresponding samples. Samples must be identified with Premise ID, farm name, phone number, and date of sample collection.